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MR. CLAY'S SPEECH

IN SUPPORT OF AN AMERICAN SYSTEM FOR THE PROTECTION OF

American Industry,

DELIVERED, MARCH 30th AND 31st, 1824.

The gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Barbour,) has embraced the occasion produced by the proposition of the gentleman from Tennessee, to strike out the minimum price, in the bill, on cotton fabrics, to express his sentiments at large on the policy of the pending measure; and it is scarcely necessary for me to say that he has evinced his usual good temper, ability, and decorum. The parts of the bill are so intermingled and interwoven together, that there can be no doubt of the fitness of this occasion to exhibit its merits or its defects. It is my intention, with the permission of the Committee, to avail myself also of this opportunity, to present to its consideration those general views, as they appear to me, of the true policy of this country, which imperiously demand the passage of this bill. I am deeply sensible Mr. Chairman, of the high responsibility of my present situation. But that responsibility inspires me with no other apprehension than that I shall be unable to fulfil my duty; with no other solicitude than that I may, at least, in some small degree, contribute to recall my country from the pursuit of a fatal policy, which appears to me *inevitably to lead to its impoverishment and ruin.* I do feel most awfully this responsibility. And, if it were allowable for us at the present day to imitate ancient examples, I would invoke the aid of the MOST HIGH. I would anxiously and fervently implore His Divine assistance; that He would be graciously pleased to shower on my country His richest blessings; and that He would sustain, on this interesting occasion, the humble individual who stands before Him, and lend him the power, moral and physical, to perform the solemn duties which now belong to his public station.

Two classes of politicians divide the people of the United States. According to the system of one, the produce of foreign industry should be subjected to no other impost than such as may be necessary to provide a public revenue; and the produce of American industry should be left to sustain itself, if it can, with no other than that incidental protection, in its competition, at home, as well as abroad, with rival foreign articles. According to the system of the other class, whilst they agree that the imposts should be mainly, and may, under any modification, be safely relied on, as a fit and convenient source of public revenue, they would so adjust and arrange the duties on foreign fabrics as to afford a gradual but adequate protection to American industry, and lessen our dependence on foreign nations, by securing a certain and ultimately a cheaper and better supply of our own wants from our own abundant resources. Both classes are equally sincere in their respective opinions, equally honest, equally patriotic, and desirous of advancing the prosperity of the country. In the discussion and consideration of these opposite opinions, for the purpose of ascertaining which has the support of truth and reason, we should, therefore, exercise every indulgence, and the greatest spirit of mutual moderation and forbearance. And in our deliberations, on this great question, we should look fearlessly and truly at the actual condition of the country, retrace the

causes which have brought us into it, and snatch, if possible, a view of the future. We should, above all, consult experience—the experience of other nations, as well as our own, as our truest and most unerring guide. In casting our eyes around us, the most prominent circumstance which fixes our attention, and challenges our deepest regret, is the *general distress which pervades the whole country.* It is forced upon us by numerous facts of the most incontestible character. It is indicated—

1. *By the diminished exports of native produce; by the depressed and reduced state of our foreign navigation.*

2. *By our diminished commerce.*

3. *By successive unthreshed crops of grain, perishing in our barns and barn-yards for the want of a market.*

4. *By the alarming diminution of the circulating medium.*

5. *By the numerous bankruptcies, not limited to the trading classes, but extending to all orders of society.*

6. *By an universal complaint of the want of employment, and a consequent reduction of the wages of labor.*

7. *By the ravenous pursuit after public situations, not for the sake of their honors, and the performance of their public duties, but as a means of private subsistence.*

8. *By the reluctant resort to the perilous use of paper money.*

9. *By the intervention of legislation in the delicate relation between debtor and creditor.*

10. *And, above all, by the low and depressed state of the value of almost every description of the whole mass of the property of the nation, which has, on an average, sunk not less than about fifty per cent, within a few years!*

This distress pervades every part of the Union, every class of society! All feel it, though it may be felt at different places in different degrees. It is like the atmosphere which surrounds us—all must inhale it, and none can escape it. In some places it has burst upon our people, without a single mitigating circumstance to temper its severity. In others, more fortunate, slight alleviations have been experienced in the expenditure of the public revenue, and in other favoring causes. A few years ago, the planting interest consoled itself with its happy exemption; but distress has now reached this interest also, which experiences, though with less severity, the general suffering. It is most painful to me to attempt to sketch or to dwell on the gloom of this picture. But I have exaggerated nothing. Perfect fidelity to the original would have authorized me to have thrown on deeper and darker hues. And it is the duty of the statesman, no less than that of the physician, to survey, with a penetrating, steady, and undismayed eye, the actual condition of the subject on which he would operate; to probe to the bottom the diseases of the body politic, if he would apply efficacious remedies. We have not, thank God, suffered in any great degree for food. But distress, resulting from the absence of a supply of the mere physical wants of our nature, is not the only, nor, perhaps, the keenest distress, to which we may be exposed. *Moral and pecuniary suffering is, if possible, more poignant. It plunges its victim into hopeless despair. It poisons, it paralyzes, the spring and source of all useful exertions.* Its unsparing action is collateral as well as direct. It falls with inexorable force at the same time upon the wretched family of embarrassment and insolvency, and upon its head. They are a faithful mirror, reflecting back upon him, at once, his own frightful image, and that no less appalling of the dearest objects of his affection.

What is the CAUSE of this wide-spreading distress, of this deep depression, which we behold stamped on the public countenance? We

are the same people. We have the same country. We cannot arraign the bounty of Providence. The showers still fall in the same grateful abundance. The sun still casts his genial and vivifying influence upon the land; and the land, fertile and diversified in its soils as ever, yields to the industrous cultivator, in boundless profusion, its accustomed fruits, its richest treasures. Our vigor is unimpaired. Our industry has not relaxed. If ever the accusation of wasteful extravagance could be made against our people, it cannot now be justly preferred. On the contrary, for the few last years at least, they have been practising the most rigid economy. The causes, then, of our present affliction, whatever they may be, are human causes, and human causes not chargeable upon the people, in their private and individual relations.

What, again I would ask, is the CAUSE of the unhappy condition of our country, which I have faintly depicted? It is to be found in the fact, that, during almost the whole existence of this government, we have shaped our industry, our navigation, and our commerce, in reference to an extraordinary war in Europe, and to foreign markets, which no longer exist; in the fact, that we have depended too much upon foreign sources of supply, and excited too little the native; in the fact, that, whilst we have cultivated, with assiduous care, our foreign resources, we have suffered those at home to *wither, in a state of neglect & abandonment.*

The consequence of the termination of the war of Europe, has been the resumption of European commerce, European navigation, and the extension of European agriculture and European industry, in all its branches. Europe, therefore, has no longer occasion to any thing like the same extent as she had during her wars, for American commerce, American navigation, the produce of American industry. Europe as she is now, tranquil and watching with the most vigilant attention all her own peculiar interests, without regard to the operation of her policy upon us, is no longer the same Europe to us, that she was when in commotion and convulsed through all her members. The effect of this altered state of Europe upon us, has been to circumscribe the employment of our marine, and greatly to reduce the value of the produce of our territorial labor. The further effect of this twofold reduction has been to decrease the value of all property, whether on the land or on the ocean, to the extent I suppose of about fifty per cent. And the still further effect has been, to diminish the amount of our circulating medium, in a proportion not less, by its transmission abroad, or its withdrawal by the banking institutions, from a necessity which they could not control. The quantity of money, in whatever form it may be, which a nation wants, is in proportion to the total mass of its wealth, and to the activity of that wealth. A nation that has but little wealth, has but a limited want of money. In stating the fact, therefore, that the total wealth of the country has diminished, within a few years, in a ratio of about fifty per cent. we shall at once fully comprehend the inevitable reduction, which must have ensued, in the total quantity of the circulating medium of the country.

A nation is most prosperous when there is a gradual and untempting addition to the aggregate of its circulating medium. It is in a condition the most adverse, when there is a rapid diminution in the quantity of the circulating medium, and a consequent depression in the value of property. In the former case, the wealth of individuals insensibly increases, and income keeps ahead of expenditure. But in the latter instance, debts have been contracted, engagements made, and habits of expense established, in reference to the existing state of wealth and of its representative. When these come to be greatly reduced, individu-

als find their debts still existing, their engagements unexecuted, and their habits inveterate. They see themselves in the possession of the same property, on which, in good faith, they had bound themselves. But that property, without their fault, possesses no longer the same value; and hence discontent, impoverishment, and ruin arise.

Let us suppose, Mr. Chairman, that Europe was again the theatre of such a general war as recently raged throughout all her dominions—such a state of war as existed in her greatest exertions and in our greatest prosperity: instantly there would arise a greedy demand for the surplus produce of our industry, for our commerce, for our navigation. The languor which now prevails in our cities, and in our sea-ports, would give way to an animated activity. Our roads and rivers would be crowded with the produce of the interior. Every where we should witness excited industry. The precious metals would re-flow from abroad upon us. Banks, which have maintained their credit, would revive their business; and new banks would be established, to take the place of those which have sunk beneath the general pressure. For it is a mistake to suppose that they have produced our present adversity; they may have somewhat aggravated it, but they were the effect and the evidence of our prosperity. Prices would again rise; the former value of property would be restored. And those embarrassed persons, who have not been already overwhelmed by the times, would suddenly find, in the augmented value of their property, and the renewal of their business, ample means to extricate themselves from all their difficulties.

The greatest want of civilized society is a market for the sale and exchange of the surplus of the produce of the labor of its members. This market may exist at home or abroad, or both; but it must exist somewhere, if society prospers; and wherever it does exist, it should be competent to the absorption of the entire surplus of production. It is most desirable that there should be both a home and a foreign market. But with respect to their relative superiority, I cannot entertain a doubt. The home market is first in order, and paramount in importance. The object of the bill, under consideration, is to create this home market, and to lay the foundations of a genuine American policy. It is opposed; and it is incumbent upon the partisans of the foreign policy, (terms which I shall use without any invidious intent,) to demonstrate that the foreign market is an adequate vent for the surplus produce of our labor. But is it so?

I. Foreign nations cannot, if they would, take our surplus produce. If the source of supply, no matter of what, increases in a greater ratio than the demand for that supply, a glut of the market is inevitable, even if we suppose both to remain perfectly unobstructed. The duplication of our population takes place in terms of about twenty-five years. The term will be more and more extended as our numbers multiply. But it will be a sufficient approximation to assume this ratio for the present. We increase therefore, in population, at the rate of about four per cent. per annum. Supposing the increase of our production to be in the same ratio, we should, every succeeding year, have of surplus produce, four per cent. more than that of the preceding year, without taking into the account the differences of seasons which neutralize each other. If, therefore, we are to rely upon the foreign market exclusively, foreign consumption ought to be shown to be increasing in the same ratio of four per cent. per annum, to be an adequate vent for our surplus produce. But, as I have supposed the measure of our increasing production to be furnished by that of our increasing population; so the measure of their power of consumption must be

determined by that of the increase of their population. Now the total foreign population, who consume our surplus produce, upon an average, do not double their aggregate number in a shorter term than that of about 100 years. Our powers of production increase then in a ratio four times greater than their powers of consumption. And hence their utter inability to receive from us our surplus produce.

But II. If they could, they will not. The policy of all Europe is adverse to the reception of our agricultural produce, so far as it comes into collision with its own; and under that limitation we are absolutely forbid to enter their ports, except under circumstances which deprive them of all value as a steady market. The policy of all Europe rejects those great staples of our country, which consist in objects of human subsistence. The policy of all Europe refuses to receive from us any thing but those raw materials of smaller value, essential to their manufactures, to which they can give a higher value, with the exception of tobacco and rice, which they cannot produce. Even Great Britain, to which we are the best customer, and from which we receive nearly one-half in value of our whole imports, will not take from us articles of subsistence produced in our country cheaper than can be produced in Great Britain. In adopting this exclusive policy, the states of Europe do not inquire what is best for us, but what suits themselves respectively. They do not take jurisdiction of the question of our interests, but limit the object of their legislation to that of the conservation of their own peculiar interests, leaving us free to prosecute ours as we please. *They do not guide themselves by that romantic philanthropy, which we see displayed here, and which invokes us to continue to purchase the produce of foreign industry, without regard to the state or prosperity of our own, that foreigners may be pleased to purchase the few remaining articles of ours which their restricted policy has not yet absolutely excluded from their consumption.* What sort of a figure would a member of the British Parliament have made; what sort of a reception would his opposition have obtained, if he had remonstrated against the passage of the Corn Law, by which British consumption is limited to the bread-stuffs of British production, to the entire exclusion of American, and stated that America could not and would not buy British manufactures, if Britain did not buy American flour?

Both the inability and the policy of foreign powers, then, forbid us to rely upon the foreign market as being an adequate vent for the surplus produce of American labor. Now let us see if this general reasoning is not fortified and confirmed by the actual experience of this country. If the foreign market may be safely relied upon, as furnishing an adequate demand for our surplus produce, then the official documents will show a progressive increase, from year to year, in the exports of our native produce, in a proportion equal to that which I have suggested. If, on the contrary, we shall find from them, that for a long term of past years, some of our most valuable staples have retrograded, some remained stationary, and others advanced but little, if any, in amount, with the exception of cotton, the deductions of reason and the lessons of experience will alike command us to withdraw our confidence in the competency of the foreign market.

The total amount of all our exports of domestic produce for the year, beginning October, 1795, and ending the 30th September, 1796, was $40,764,097. Estimating the increase according to the ratio of the increase of our population, that is, at four per cent. per annum, the amount of the exports of the same produce, in the year ending on the 30th September last, ought to have been $85,420,861. It was in fact

only $47,155,408. Taking the average of five years, from 1803 to 1807, inclusive, the amount of native produce exported was $43,202,751 for each of those years. Estimating what it ought to have been, during the last year, applying the principle suggested to that amount, there should have been exported $77,766,751 instead of $47,155,408.

If these comparative amounts of the aggregate actual exports and what they ought to have been, be discouraging, we shall find, on descending into particulars, still less cause of satisfaction. The export of tobacco in 1791 was 112,428 hogsheads. That was the year of the largest exportation of that article; but it is the only instance in which I have selected the maximum of exportation. The amount of what we ought to have exported last year, estimated according to the scale of increase which I have used, is 266,332 hogsheads. The actual export was 99,009 hogsheads.

We exported in 1803 the quantity of 1,311,353 barrels of flour; and ought to have exported last year 2,361,333 barrels. We, in fact, exported only 756,702 barrels. Of that quantity we sent to South America, 150,000 barrels, according to a statement furnished me by the diligence of a friend near me, (Mr. Poinsett,) to whose valuable mass of accurate information, in regard to that interesting quarter of the world, I have had occasion frequently to apply. But that demand is temporary, growing out of the existing state of war. Whenever peace is restored to it, and I now hope that the day is not distant when its independence will be generally acknowledged, there cannot be a doubt, that it will supply its own consumption. In all parts of it the soil, either from climate or from elevation, is well adapted to the culture of wheat; and no where can better wheat be produced than in some portions of Mexico and Chili. Still the market of South America is one which, on other accounts, deserves the greatest consideration. And I congratulate you, the committee, and the country, on the recent adoption of a more auspicious policy towards it.

We exported in 1803, Indian corn to the amount of 2,074,608 bushels. The quantity should have been, in 1823, 3,734,288 bushels. The actual quantity exported was 749,034 bushels, or about one-fifth of what it should have been, and a little more than one-third of what it was more than twenty years ago. We ought not then to be surprised at the extreme depression of the price of that article, of which I have heard my honorable friend, (Mr. Bassett,) complain, nor of the distress of the corn-growing districts adjacent to Chesapeake Bay.

We exported 77,934 barrels of beef in 1803, and last year but 61,418, instead of 140,274 barrels. In the same year, (1803,) we exported 96,602 barrels of pork, and last year 55,529, instead of 173,882 barrels. Rice has not advanced, by any means in the proportion which it ought to have done. All the small articles, such as cheese, butter, candles, &c. too minute to detail, but important in their aggregate, have also materially diminished.

Cotton alone has advanced. But whilst the quantity of it is augmented, its actual value is considerably diminished. The total quantity last year exceeded that of the preceding year by near thirty millions of pounds. And yet the total value of the year of smaller exportation, exceeded that of the last year by upwards of three and a half millions of dollars. If this article, the capacity of our country to produce which was scarcely known in 1790, were subtracted from the mass of our exports, the value of the residue would only be a little upwards of $27,000,000, during the last year.

The distribution of the articles of our exports throughout the United

States, cannot fail to fix the attention of the committee. Of the $47,155,408, to which they amounted last year, three articles alone, (cotton, rice, and tobacco,) composed together $28,549,177. Now these articles are chiefly produced at the South. And if we estimate that portion of our population who are actually engaged in their culture, it would probably not exceed two millions. Thus, then, less than one-fifth of the whole population of the United States produced upwards of one-half, nearly two-thirds, of the entire value of the exports of the last year.

Is this foreign market, so incompetent at present, and which, limited as its demands are, operates so unequally upon the productive labor of our country, likely to improve in future? If I am correct in the views which I have presented to the Committee, it must become worse and worse. What can improve it? *Europe will not abandon her own agriculture to foster ours. We may even anticipate that she will more and more enter into competition with us in the supply of the West India market.* That of South America, for articles of subsistence, will probably soon vanish. The *value* of our exports, for the future, may remain at about what it was last year. But, if we do not create some new market, if we persevere in the existing pursuits of agriculture, the inevitable consequence must be, to augment greatly the quantity of our produce, and to lessen its price in the foreign market. Can there be a doubt on this point? Take the article of cotton, for example, which is almost the only article that now remunerates labor and capital. A certain description of labor is powerfully attracted towards the cotton growing country. *The cultivation will be greatly extended, the aggregate amount, annually produced, will be vastly augmented.* The price will fall. The more unfavorable soils will then be gradually abandoned. And I have no doubt that, in a few years, it will cease to be profitably produced, any where north of the 34th degree of latitude. *But, in the mean time, large numbers of the cotton-growers will suffer the greatest distress.* And whilst this distress is brought upon our own country, foreign industry will be stimulated by the very cause which occasions our distress. For by surcharging the markets abroad, the price of the raw material being reduced, the manufacturer will be able to supply cotton fabrics cheaper; and the consumption in his own country, and in foreign nations, other than ours, (where the *value* of the import must be limited to the value of the export, which I have supposed to remain the same,) being proportionably extended, there will be consequently an increased demand for the produce of *his* industry.

Our agricultural is our greatest interest. It ought ever to be predominant. All others should bend to it. And in considering what is for its advantage, we should contemplate it in all its varieties, of planting, farming and grazing. Can we do nothing to invigorate it; nothing to correct the errors of the past, and to brighten the still more unpromising prospects which lie before us? We have seen, I think, the causes of the distresses of the country. We have seen, that an exclusive dependence upon the foreign market must lead to still severer distress, to impoverishment, to ruin. We must then change somewhat our course. We must give a new direction to some portion of our industry. We must speedily adopt a genuine American policy. Still cherishing the foreign market, let us create also a home market, to give further scope to the consumption of the produce of American industry. *Let us counteract the policy of foreigners, and withdraw the support which we now give to their industry, and stimulate that of our own country. It should be a prominent object with wise legislators, to multiply the vocations*

and extend the business of society, as far as it can be done, by the protection of our interests at home, against the injurious effects of foreign legislation.

Suppose we were a nation of fishermen, or of skippers, to the exclusion of every other occupation, and the legislature had the power to introduce the pursuits of agriculture and manufactures, would not our happiness be promoted by an exertion of its authority? All the existing employments of society—the learned professions—commerce—agriculture, are now overflowing. We stand in each other's way.—Hence the want of employment. Hence the eager pursuit after public stations, which I have before glanced at. I have been again and again shocked, during this session, by instances of solicitation for places, before the vacancies existed. The pulse of incumbents, who happen to be taken ill, is not marked with more anxiety by the attending physicians, than by those who desire to succeed them, though with very opposite feelings. Our old friend, the faithful sentinel, who has stood so long at our door, and the gallantry of whose patriotism deserves to be noticed, because it was displayed on a memorable occasion, in this unfortunate city, when that virtue was most rare and most wanted, became indisposed some weeks ago. The first intelligence which I had of his dangerous illness, was by an application for his unvacated place. I hastened to assure myself of the extent of his danger, and was happy to find that the eagerness of succession outstripped the progress of disease. By creating a new and extensive business, then, we should not only give employment to those who want it, and augment the sum of national wealth, by all that this new business would create, but we should meliorate the condition of those who are now engaged in existing employments. In Europe, particularly in Great Britain, their large standing armies, large navies, large even on their peace arrangement, their established church, afford to their population employments, which, in that respect, the happier constitution of our government does not tolerate but in a very limited degree. The peace establishments of our army and our navy, are extremely small, and I hope ever will be. We have no established church, and I trust never shall have. In proportion as the enterprise of our citizens, in public employments, is circumscribed, should we excite and invigorate it in private pursuits.

The creation of a home market is not only necessary to procure for our agriculture a just reward of its labors, but it is indispensable to obtain a supply of our necessary wants. If we cannot sell, we cannot buy. *That portion of our population, (and we have seen that it is not less than four-fifths,) which makes comparatively nothing that foreigners will buy, has nothing to make purchases with from foreigners.* It is in vain that we are told of the amount of our exports supplied by the planting interest.—They may enable the planting interest to supply all its wants: but they bring no ability to the interests not planting; unless, which cannot be pretended, the planting interest afford an adequate vent for the surplus produce of the labor of all other interests.

It is in vain to tantalize us with the greater cheapness of foreign fabrics. There must be an ability to purchase, if an article be obtained, whatever may be the price, high or low, at which it was sold. And a cheap article is as much beyond the grasp of him who has no means to buy, as a high one. Even if it were true that the American manufacturer would supply consumption at dearer rates, it is better to have his fabrics than [look for] unattainable foreign fabrics; because it is better to be ill supplied than not supplied at all. A coarse coat, which will communicate warmth and cover nakedness, is better than no coat.—The superiority of the home market results, 1st, from its steadiness

and comparative certainty at all times; 2d, from the creation of reciprocal interests; 3d, from its greater security; and, lastly, from an ultimate and not distant augmentation of consumption, (and consequently of comfort,) from increased quantity and reduced prices.

But this home market, highly desirable as it is, can only be created and cherished by the PROTECTION of our own legislation against the inevitable prostration of our industry, which must ensue from the action of FOREIGN policy and legislation. The effect and the value of this domestic care of our own interests will be obvious from a few facts and considerations. Let us suppose that a half a million of persons are now employed abroad in fabricating for our consumption, those articles, of which by the operation of this bill a supply is intended to be provided within ourselves. *That half a million of persons are, in effect, subsisted by us; but their actual means of subsistence are drawn from foreign agriculture.* If we could transport them to this country, and incorporate them in the mass of our own population, there would instantly arise a demand for an amount of provisions equal to that which would be requisite for their subsistence throughout the whole year.—That demand in the article of flour alone, would not be less than the quantity of about 900,000 barrels, besides a proportionate quantity of beef, and pork, and other articles of subsistence. But 900,000 barrels of flour exceed the entire quantity exported last year, by nearly 150,000 barrels. *What activity would not this give, what cheerfulness would it not communicate, to our now dispirited farming interest!*

But if, instead of these 500,000 *artizans emigrating from abroad, we give by this bill employment to an equal number of our own citizens now engaged in unprofitable agriculture, or idle, from the want of business, the beneficial effect upon the productions of our farming labour would be nearly doubled.* The quantity would be diminished by a subtraction of the produce from the labour of all those who should be diverted from its pursuits to manufacturing industry, and the value of the residue would be enhanced, both by that diminution and the creation of the home market to the extent supposed. And the honorable gentleman from Virginia may repress any apprehensions which he entertains, that the plough will be abandoned, and our fields remain unsown. For, under all the modifications of social industry, if you will secure to it a just reward, the greater attractions of agriculture will give to it that proud superiority which it has always maintained.

If we suppose no actual abandonment of farming, but, what is most likely, a gradual and imperceptible employment of population in the business of manufacturing, instead of being compelled to resort to agriculture, the salutary effect would be nearly the same. Is any part of our common country likely to be injured by a transfer of the theatre of fabrication, for our own consumption, from Europe to America? All that those parts, if any there be, which will not or cannot engage in manufactures, should require, is, that their consumption should be well supplied; and if the objects of that consumption are produced in other parts of the Union, that can manufacture, far from having on that account any just cause of complaint, their patriotism will and ought to inculcate a cheerful acquiescence in what essentially contributes, and is indispensably necessary, to the prosperity of the common family.

The great desideratum in political economy, is the same as in private pursuits; that is, what is the best application of the aggregate industry of a nation, that can be made honestly to produce the largest sum of national wealth? Labour is the source of all wealth; but it is

not natural labour only. And the fundamental error of the gentleman from Virginia, and of the school to which he belongs, in deducing, from our sparse population, our unfitness for the introduction of the arts, consists in their not sufficiently weighing the importance of the power of machinery. In former times, when but little comparative use was made of machinery, manual labour, and the price of wages, were circumstances of the greatest consideration. But it is far otherwise in these later times. Such are the improvements and the perfection in machinery, that, in analyzing the compound value of many fabrics, the element of natural labour is so inconsiderable as almost to escape detection. This truth is demonstrated by many facts. Formerly Asia, in consequence of the density of her population, and the consequent lowness of wages, laid Europe under tribute for many of her fabrics. Now Europe reacts upon Asia, and Great Britain in particular, throws back upon her countless millions of people, the rich treasures produced by artificial labour, to a vast amount, infinitely cheaper than they can be manufactured by the natural exertions of that portion of the globe.

But Britain is herself the most striking illustration of the immense power of machinery. Upon what other principle can you account for the enormous wealth which she has accumulated, and which she annually produces? A statistical writer of that country, several years ago, estimated the total amount of the artificial or machine labour of the nation, to be equal to that of 100,000,000 of able-bodied labourers.—Subsequent estimates of her artificial labour at the present day, carry it to the enormous height of 200,000,000. But the population of the three kingdoms is 21,500,000. Supposing that population to furnish able-bodied labour to the amount of 4,000,000, the natural labour will be two per cent. of the artificial labour. In the production of wealth she operates, therefore, by a power, (including the whole population,) of 221,500,000; or, in other words, by a power 11 times greater than the total of her natural power. If we suppose the machine labour of the United States to be equal to that of 10,000,000 of able-bodied men, the United States will operate, in the creation of wealth, by a power, (including all their population,) of 20,000,000. In the creation of wealth, therefore, the power of Great Britain, compared to that of the United States, is as eleven to one.

That these views are not imaginary, will be, I think, evinced, by contrasting the wealth, the revenue, the power of two countries.—Upon what other hypothesis can we explain those almost incredible exertions which Britain made during the late wars of Europe? Look at her immense subsidies! Behold her standing, unaided and alone, and breasting the storm of Napoleon's colossal power, when all continental Europe owned and yielded to its irresistible sway; and finally contemplate her vigorous prosecution of the war, with and without allies, to its splendid termination on the ever-memorable field of Waterloo! The British works which the gentleman from Virginia has quoted, portray a state of the most wonderful prosperity, in regard to wealth and resources, that ever was before contemplated.

Let us look a little into the semi-official pamphlet, written with great force, clearness, and ability, and the valuable work of Lowe, to both of which that gentleman has referred. The revenue of the United Kingdom amounted, during the latter years of the war, to 70,000,000 of pounds sterling; and one year it rose to the astonishing height of 90,000,000 sterling, equal to 400,000,000 of dollars. This was actual revenue, made up of real contributions, from the purses of the people.

After the close of the war, ministers slowly and reluctantly reduced the military and naval establishments, and accommodated them to a state of peace. The pride of power, every where the same, always unwillingly surrenders any of those circumstances, which display its pomp and exhibit its greatness. Cotemporaneous with this reduction, Britain was enabled to lighten some of the heaviest burdens of taxation, and particularly that most onerous of all, the *income tax*. In this lowered state, the revenue of peace, gradually rising from the momentary depression incident to a transition from war, attained, in 1822, the vast amount of 55,000,000 sterling, upwards of 240,000,000 of dollars, and more than eleven times that of the United States for the same year; thus indicating the difference, which I have suggested, in the respective productive powers of the two countries. The excise alone, (collected under twenty-five different heads,) amounted to 28.000,000, more than one-half of the total revenue of the kingdom. This great revenue allows Great Britain to constitute an efficient sinking fund of 5,000,000 sterling, being an excess of actual income beyond expenditure, and amounting to more than the entire revenue of the United States.

If we look at the commerce of England, we shall perceive that its prosperous condition no less denotes the immensity of her riches.—The average of three years exports, ending in 1739, was between 13 and 14 millions. The average for the same term ending in 1822, was 40 millions sterling. The average of the imports for three years, ending in 1739, was 17 millions. The average for the same term, ending in 1822, was 36 millions, showing a favourable balance of four millions.* Thus, in a period not longer than that which has elapsed since the establishment of our constitution, have the exports of that kingdom been tripled; and this has mainly been the effect of the power of machinery.

The total amount of the commerce of Great Britain is greater since the peace, by one-fourth, than it was during the war. The average of her tonnage, during the most flourishing period of the war, was 2,400,000 tons. Its average, during the three years, 1819, 1820, and 1821, was 2,600,000; exhibiting an increase of 200,000 tons.

If we glance at some of the more prominent articles of her manufactures, we shall be assisted in comprehending the true nature of the sources of her riches. The amount of cotton fabrics exported, in the most prosperous year of the war, was *eighteen* million sterling. In the year 1820, it was 16,600,000; in 1821, 20,150,000; in 1822, £21,639,000 sterling; presenting the astonishing increase in two years of upwards of five millions. The total amount of imports into Great Britain from all foreign parts, of the article of cotton wool, is five millions sterling. After supplying most abundantly the consumption of cotton fabrics within the country, (and a people better fed and clad and housed, are not to be found under the sun, than the British nation,) by means of her industry, she gives to this cotton wool a new value, which enables her to sell to foreign nations to the amount of £21,639,000, making a clear profit of upwards of £16,500,000 sterling!

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* Mr. Clay has here fallen into a capital error. He has taken the total amount of imports, *foreign and domestic*, and only the exports of *domestic productions and fabrics*. The real balance is more than quintuple the sum here assumed. The total exports of Great Britain, foreign and domestic,

in 1822 amounted to - - - - - -	52,770,418*l*	=$237,466,881
Total imports - - - - - - - - -	29,401,807*l*	= 132,158,749
Balance, - - - - - - - -	23,368,611*l*	= 105,308,132

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In 1821, the value of the export of woollen manufactures was £4,300,000. In 1822, it was £5,500,000.

The success of her restrictive policy is strikingly illustrated in the article of silk. In the manufacture of that article she labours under great disadvantages, besides that of not producing the raw material:—She has subdued them all, and the increase of the manufacture has been most rapid. Although she is still unable to maintain, in foreign countries, a successful competition with the silks of France, of India, and of Italy, and therefore exports but little, she gives to the two millions of the raw material which she imports, in various forms, a value of ten millions, which chiefly enter into British consumption. Let us suppose that she was dependent upon foreign nations for these ten millions, what an injurious effect would it not have upon her commercial relations with them? The average of the exports of British manufactures, during the peace, exceeds the average of the most productive years of the war. The amount of her wealth annually produced, is three hundred and fifty millions sterling; bearing a large proportion to all of her pre-existing wealth. The agricultural portion of it is said by the gentleman of Virginia to be greater than that created by any other branch of her industry. But that flows mainly from a policy similar to that proposed by this bill. One-third only of her population is engaged in agriculture; the other two-thirds furnishing a market for the produce of that third. Withdraw this market, and what becomes of her agriculture? The power and the wealth of Great Britain cannot be more strikingly illustrated, than by a comparison of her population and revenue with those of other countries and with our own. [Here Mr. Clay exhibited the following table, made out from authentic materials.]

	Population.	Taxes and public burdens.	Taxation per capita.
Russia in Europe,	37,000,000	18,000,000*l.*	*l.* 0 9 9
France, including Corsica	30,700,000	37,000,000*l.*	*l.* 1 4 0
Great Britain, exclusive of Ireland, (the taxes computed according to the value of money on the European continent.)	14,500,000	40,000,000*l.*	*l.* 2 15 0
Great Britain and Ireland collectively,	21,500,000	44,000,000*l.*	*l.* 2 0 0
England alone,	11,600,000	36,000,000*l.*	*l.* 3 2 0
Spain,	11,000,000	6,000,000*l.*	*l.* 0 11 0
Ireland,	7,000,000	4,000,000*l.*	*l.* 0 11 0
The United States of America,	10,000,000	4,500,000*l.*	*l.* 0 9 0

From this exhibit we must remark, that the wealth of Great Britain, (and consequently her power,) is greater than that of any of the other nations with which it is compared. The amount of the contributions which she draws from the pockets of her subjects, is not referred to for imitation, but as indicative of their wealth. The burden of taxation is always relative to the ability of the subjects of it. A poor nation can pay but little. And the heavier taxes of British subjects, for example, in consequence of their greater wealth, may be easier borne than the much lighter taxes of Spanish subjects, in consequence of their extreme poverty.

The object of wise governments should be, by sound legislation, *so to protect the industry of their own citizens against the policy of foreign powers, as to give to it the most expansive force in the production of wealth.* Great Britain has ever acted, and still acts, on this policy. She has pushed her protection of British interest further than any other nation

has fostered its industry. The result is, greater wealth among her subjects, and consequently greater ability to pay their public burdens. If their taxation is estimated by their *natural* labor alone, nominally it is greater than the taxation of the subjects of any other power. But if on a scale of their national and artificial labor compounded, it is less than the taxation of any other people. Estimating it on that scale, and assuming the aggregate of the natural and artificial labor of the United Kingdom to be what I have already stated, 221,500,000, the actual taxes paid by a British subject are only about three and seven pence sterling. Estimating our own taxes, on a similar scale,—that is, supposing both descriptions of labor to be equal to that of 20,000,000 of able-bodied persons,—the amount of tax paid by each person in the United States is 4*s.* 6*d.* sterling.

The Committee will observe, from this table, that the measure of the wealth of a nation is indicated by the measure of its protection of its industry; and that the measure of the poverty of a nation is marked by that of the degree in which it neglects and abandons the care of its own industry, leaving it exposed to the action of foreign powers. Great Britain protects most of her industry, and the wealth of Great Britain is consequently the greatest. France is next in the degree of protection, and France is next in the order of wealth. Spain most neglects the duty of protecting the industry of her subjects, and Spain is one of the poorest of European nations. Unfortunate Ireland, disinherited, or rendered in her industry subservient to England, is exactly in the same state of poverty with Spain, measured by the rule of taxation. And the United States are still poorer than either.

The views of British prosperity, which I have endeavoured to present, show that her protecting policy is adapted alike to a state of war and of peace. *Self-poised, resting upon her own internal resources, possessing a home market, carefully cherished and guarded, she is ever prepared for any emergency.* We have seen her coming out of a war of incalculable exertion, and of great duration, with her power unbroken, her means undiminished. We have seen that almost *every revolving year of peace has brought along with it an increase of her manufactures, of her commerce, and consequently, of her navigation.* We have seen that, constructing her prosperity upon the solid foundation of her own protecting policy, it is unaffected by the vicissitudes of other states. What is our own condition? Depending upon the state of foreign powers—confiding exclusively in a foreign, to the culpable neglect of a domestic, policy—our interests are affected by all their movements. *Their wars their misfortunes, are the only source of our prosperity.* In their peace, and our peace, we behold our condition the reverse of that of Great Britain—and all our interest, stationary or declining. *Peace brings to us none of the blessings of peace.* Our system is anomalous; alike unfitted to general tranquility, and to a state of war or peace, on the part of our own country. It can succeed only in the rare occurrence of a general state of war throughout Europe.

I am no eulogist of England. I am far from recommending her systems of taxation. I have adverted to them only as manifesting her extraordinary ability. The political and foreign interests of that nation may have been, as I believe them to have been, often badly managed. Had she abstained from the wars into which she has been plunged by her ambition, or the mistaken policy of her ministers, the prosperity of England would, unquestionably, have been much greater. But it may happen that the public liberty, and the foreign relations of a nation, have been badly provided for, and yet that its political economy

has been wisely managed. The alacrity or sullenness with which a people pay taxes, depends upon their wealth or poverty. If the system of their rulers leads to their impoverishment, they can contribute but little to the necessities of the state;—if to their wealth, they cheerfully and promptly pay the burdens imposed on them. Enormous as British taxation appears to be, in comparison with that of other nations, but really lighter, as it in fact is, when we consider the great wealth, and the powers of production of the nation, that vast amount is collected with the most astonishing regularity. Here Mr. Clay read certain passages from Holt, showing that, in 1822, there was not a solitary prosecution arising out of the collection of the assessed taxes, which are there considered among the most burdensome, and that the prosecutions for violations of the excise laws, in all its numerous branches, were sensibly and progressively decreasing.

Having called the attention of the Committee to the present adverse state of our country, and endeavoured to point out the causes which have led to it; having shown that similar causes, wherever they exist in other countries, lead to the same adversity in their condition; and having shown that, wherever we find opposite causes prevailing, a high and animating state of national prosperity exists, the Committee will agree with me in thinking that it is the solemn duty of government to apply a remedy to the evils which afflict our country, if it can apply one. Is there no remedy within the reach of the government? Are we doomed to behold our industry languish and decay, yet more and more? But there is a remedy, and that remedy consists in modifying our foreign policy, and in adopting a genuine AMERICAN SYSTEM. *We must naturalize the arts in our country; and we must naturalize them by the only means which the wisdom of nations has yet discovered to be effectual; by adequate protection, against the otherwise overwhelming influence of foreigners. This is only to be accomplished by the establishment of a tariff*, to the consideration of which I am now brought.

And what is this tariff? It seems to have been regarded as a sort of monster, huge and deformed—a wild beast, endowed with tremendous powers of destruction, about to be let loose among our people—if not to devour them, at least to consume their substance. But let us calm our passions, and deliberately survey this alarming, this terrific being. *The sole object of the tariff is to tax the produce of foreign industry, with the view of promoting American industry.* The tax is exclusively levelled at foreign industry. That is the avowed and the direct purpose of the tariff. If it subjects any part of American industry to burdens, that is an effect not intended, but is altogether incidental, and perfectly involuntary.

It has been treated as an imposition of burdens upon one part of the community by design, for the benefit of another; as if, in fact, money were taken from the pockets of one portion of the people and put into the pockets of another. But is that a fair representation? No man pays the duty assessed on the foreign article by compulsion, but voluntarily; and this voluntary duty, if paid, goes into the common exchequer, for the common benefit of all. Consumption has four objects of choice. 1. It may abstain from the use of the foreign article, and thus avoid the payment of the tax. 2. It may employ the rival American fabric. 3. It may engage in the business of manufacturing, which this bill is designed to foster. 4. Or it may supply itself from the household manufactures. But it is said by the honourable gentlemen from Virginia, that the South, owing to the character of a certain portion of its population, cannot engage in the business of manufacturing. Now I do not agree in that opinion to the extent in which it is assert-

ed. The circumstance alluded to may disqualify the South from engaging, in every branch of manufacture, as largely as other quarters of the Union, but to some branches of it, that part of our population is well adapted. It indisputably affords great facility in the household or domestic line. But, if the gentleman's premises were true, could his conclusion be admitted? According to him, a certain part of the population, happily much the smallest, is peculiarly situated. The circumstance of its degradation unfits it for the manufacturing arts. The well being of the other, and the larger part of our population, requires the introduction of those arts. What is to be done in this conflict? The gentleman would have us abstain from adopting a policy called for by the interest of the greater and freer part of our population. But is this reasonable? Can it be expected that the interests of the greater part should be made to bend to th e condition of the servile part of our population? That, in effect, would be to make us the slaves of slaves.

I went, with great pleasure, along with my southern friends, and I am ready again to unite with them in protesting against the exercise of any legislative power, on the part of congress, over that delicate subject, because it was my solemn conviction, that congress was interdicted, or at least not authorized, by the constitution, to exercise any such legislative power. And I am sure that the patriotism of the South may be exclusively relied upon to reject a policy which should be dictated by considerations although connected with that degraded class, to the prejudice of the residue of our population. But does not a perseverance in the foreign policy, as it now exists, in fact make all parts of the Union, not planting, tributary to the planting parts? What is the argument? It is, that we must continue freely to receive the produce of foreign industry, without regard to the protection of American industry, that a market may be retained for the sale abroad of the produce of the planting portion of the country; and that if we lessen the consumption, in all parts of America, those which are not planting, as well as the planting sections, of foreign manufactures, we diminish to that extent the foreign market for the planting produce. The existing state of things, indeed, presents a sort of tacit compact between the cotton grower and the British manufacturer, the stipulations of which are, on the part of the cotton grower, that the whole of the United States, the other portions as well as the cotton growing, shall remain open and unrestricted in the consumption of British manufactures; and, on the part of the British manufacturer, that, in consideration thereof, he will continue to purchase the cotton of the South. Thus, then, we perceive that *the proposed measure, instead of sacrificing the South to the other parts of the Union, seeks only to preserve them from being absolutely sacrificed under the operation of the tacit compact which I have described.* Supposing the South to be actually incompetent, or disinclined to embark at all in the business of manufacturing, is not its interest, nevertheless, likely to be promoted by creating a new and an American source of supply for its consumption? Now foreign powers, and Great Britain principally, have the monopoly of the supply of southern consumption. *If this bill should pass, an American competitor in the supply of the south would be raised up, and ultimately I cannot doubt that it will be supplied cheaper and better.*

I have before had occasion to state, and will now again mention, the beneficial effects of American competition with Europe in furnishing a supply of the article of cotton bagging. After the late war, the influx of the Scottish manufacture prostrated the American establishments. The consequence was, that *the Scotch possessed the monopoly of the sup-*

ply ; and the price of it rose, and attained, the year before the last, a height which amounted to more than an equivalent for ten years protection to the American manufacture. This circumstance tempted American industry again to engage in the business, and several valuable manufactories have been established in Kentucky. They have reduced the price of the fabric very considerably ; but without the protection of government they may be again prostrated—and then the Scottish manufacturer engrossing the supply of our consumption, the price will probably again rise.

It has been tauntingly asked if Kentucky cannot maintain herself in a competition with the two Scottish towns of Inverness and Dundee? But is that a fair statement of the case? Those two towns are cherished and sustained by the whole protecting policy of the British empire, whilst Kentucky cannot, and the general government will not, extend a like protection to the few Kentucky villages in which the article is made.

If the cotton growing consumption could be constitutionally exempted from the operation of this bill, it might be fair to exempt it upon the condition that foreign manufactures, the proceeds of the sale of cotton abroad, should not enter at all into the consumption of the other parts of the United States. But such an arrangement as that, if it could be made, would probably be objected to by the cotton growing country itself.

2. The second objection to the proposed bill is, that it will diminish the amount of our exports. It can have no effect upon our exports, except those which are sent to Europe. Except tobacco and rice, we send there nothing but raw materials. The argument is, that Europe will not buy of us, if we do not buy of her. The first objection to it is, that it calls upon us to look to the question, and to take care of European ability in legislating for American interests. Now, if in legislating for their interests, they would consider and provide for our ability, the principle of reciprocity would enjoin us so to regulate our intercourse with them, as to leave their ability unimpaired. But I have shown that, in the adoption of their own policy, their inquiry is strictly limited to a consideration of their peculiar interests without any regard to that of ours. The next remark I would make is, that the bill only operates upon *certain* articles of European industry, which it is supposed our interest requires us to manufacture within ourselves ; and although its effect will be to diminish the amount of our imports of *those* articles, it leaves them free to supply us with any other produce of their industry. And since the circle of human comforts, refinements, and luxuries, is of great extent, Europe will still find herself able to purchase from us what she has hitherto done, and to discharge the debt in some of those objects. If there be any diminution in our exports to Europe, it will probably be in the article of cotton to Great Britain. I have stated that Britain buys cotton wool to the amount of about five millions sterling, and sells to foreign states to the amount of upwards of twenty-one millions and a half. Of this sum we take a little upwards of a million and a half. The residue of about twenty millions, she must sell to other foreign powers than the United States. Now their market will continue open to her, as much after the passage of this bill, as before. She will therefore require from us the raw material to supply their consumption. But, it is said, she may refuse to purchase it of us, and seek a supply elsewhere. There can be but little doubt that she now resorts to us, because we can supply her cheaper and better than any other country. And it would be unreasonable to suppose that she would cease, from any pique towards us, to pursue her own interest. Suppose she was to decline purchasing from us : the consequence would be, that she would lose the market for the twenty millions sterling, which she now sells other

foreign powers, or enter it under a disadvantageous competition with us or with other nations, who should obtain their supplies of the raw material from us. If there should be any diminution, therefore, in the exportation of cotton, it would only be in the proportion of about one and a half to twenty, that is, a little upwards of five per cent.; the loss of a market for which, abroad, would be fully compensated by the market for the article created at home. Lastly, I would observe, that the new application of our industry, producing new objects of exportation, and they possessing much greater value than in the raw state, we should be in the end amply indemnified, by their exportation. Already the item in our foreign exports of manufactures is considerable; and we know that our cotton fabrics have been recently exported in a large amount to South America, where they maintain a successful competition with those of any other country.

3. The third objection to the tariff is, that it will diminish our navigation. This great interest deserves every encouragement, consistent with the paramount interest of agriculture. In the order of nature it is secondary to both agriculture and manufactures. Its business is the transportation of the productions of those two superior branches of industry. It cannot therefore be expected, that they shall be moulded or sacrificed to suit its purposes; but, on the contrary, navigation must accommodate itself to the actual state of agriculture and manufactures. If, as I believe, we have nearly reached the maximum in value of our exports of raw produce to Europe, the effect hereafter will be, as it respects that branch of our trade, if we persevere in the foreign system, to retain our navigation at the point which it has now reached. By reducing, indeed, as will probably take place, the price of our raw materials, a further quantity of them could be exported, and, of course, additional employment might, in that way, be given to our tonnage; but that would be at the expense of the agricultural interest.

If I am right in supposing that no effect will be produced by this measure upon any other branch of our export trade, but that to Europe; that, with regard to this, there will be no sensible diminution of our exports; and that the new direction given to a portion of our industry will produce other objects of exportation, the probability is, that our foreign tonnage will be even increased under the operation of this bill. But if I am mistaken in these views, and it should experience any reduction, the increase in our coasting tonnage resulting from the greater activity of domestic exchanges, will more than compensate the injury. Although our navigation partakes in the general distress of the country, it is less depressed than any other of our great interests. The foreign tonnage has been gradually, though slowly, increasing, since 1818. And our coasting tonnage, since 1816, has increased upwards of one hundred thousand tons.

4. It is next contended that the effect of the measure will be to diminish our foreign commerce. The objection assumes, what I have endeavoured to controvert, that there will be a reduction in the value of our exports. Commerce is an exchange of commodities. Whatever will tend to augment the wealth of a nation must increase its capacity to make these exchanges. By new productions, or creating new values in the fabricated forms which shall be given to old objects of our industry, we shall give to commerce a fresh spring, a new aliment.

The foreign commerce of the country, from causes, some of which I have endeavored to point out, has been extended as far as it can be. And I think there can be but little doubt that the balance of trade is, and for some time past has been against us. I was surprised to hear the learned gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Webster,) rejecting as a detected and exploded

fallacy, the idea of a balance of trade. I have not time nor inclination now to discuss that topic. But I will observe, that all nations act upon the supposition of the reality of its existence, and seek to avoid a trade, the balance of which is unfavorable, and foster that which presents a favorable balance. However the account be made up, whatever may be the items of a trade, commodities, fishing industry, marine labor, the carrying trade. all of which I admit should be comprehended, there can be no doubt, I think, that the totality of the exchanges of all descriptions made by one nation with another, or against the totality of the exchanges of all other nations together, may be such as to present the state of an unfavorable balance with the one or with all. It is true that, in the long run, the measures of these exchanges, that is, the totality in value of what is given and of what is received, must be equal to each other. But great distress may be felt long before the counterpoise can be effected. In the mean time, there will be an export of the precious metals, to the deep injury of internal trade, an unfavorable state of exchange, an export of all public securities, a resort to credit, debt, and mortgages. Most, if not all of these circumstances, are believed now to be indicated by our country, in its foreign commercial relations. What have we received, for example. for the public stocks sent to England ? Goods. But those stocks are our bond, which must be paid. Although the solidity of the credit of the English public securities is not surpassed by that of our own, strong as it justly is, when have we seen English stocks sold in our market, and regularly quoted in the prices current, as American stocks are in England ? An unfavorable balance with one nation *may* be made up by a favorable balance with other nations ; but the fact of the existence of that unfavorable balance is strong presumptive evidence against the trade.

Commerce will regulate itself! Yes, and the extravagance of a spend-thrift heir who squanders the rich patrimony which has descended to him will regulate itself ultimately. But it will be a regulation which will exhibit him in the end safely confined within the walls of a jail. Commerce will regulate itself! But is it not the duty of wise governments to watch its course, and beforehand, to provide against even distant evils ; by prudent legislation stimulating the industry of their own people, and checking the policy of foreign powers as it operates on them? The supply, then, of the subjects of foreign commerce, no less than the supply of consumption at home, requires of us to give a portion of our labor such a direction as will enable us to produce them. That is the object of the measure under consideration, and I cannot doubt that if adopted, it will accomplish its object.

5. The fifth objection to the tariff, is, that it will diminish the public revenue, disable us from paying the public debt, and finally compel a resort to a system of excise and internal taxation. This objection is founded upon the supposition, that the reduction in the importation of the objects, on which the increased duties are to operate, will be such as to produce the alleged effect. All this is matter of mere conjecture, and can only be determined by experiment. I have very little doubt, with my colleague, (Mr. Trimble,) that the revenue will be increased considerably, for some years at least, under the operation of this bill. The diminution in the quantity imported will be compensated by the augmentation of the duty. In reference to the article of molasses, for example, if the import of it should be reduced fifty per cent. the amount of duty collected would be the same as it now is. But it will not, in all probability, be reduced by any thing like that proportion. And then there are some other articles which will continue to be introduced in as large quantities as ever notwithstanding the increase of duty, the object in reference to them being revenue, and not the encouragement of domestic manufactures. Another cause will render the revenue of this year, in particular, much more productive than it otherwise would have been ; and that is, that large quantities of goods have been in-

troduced into the country, in anticipation of the adoption of this measure. The eagle does not dart a keener gaze upon his intended prey than that with which the British manufacturer and merchant watches the foreign market, and the course even of our elections as well as our legislation. The passage of this bill has been expected; and all our information is, that the importations, during this spring, have been immense.

But further, the measure of our importations is that of our exportations. If I am right in supposing, that, in future, the amount of these in the old or new forms of the produce of our labor will not be diminished, but probably increased, then the amount of our importations, and consequently, of our revenue, will not be reduced, but may be extended. If these ideas be correct, there will be no inability on the part of government to extinguish the public debt. The payment of that debt, and the consequent liberation of the public resources from the charge of it, is extremely desirable. No one is more anxious than I am to see that important object accomplished. But I entirely concur with the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Barbour,) in thinking that no material sacrifice of any of the great interests of the nation ought to be made to effectuate it.

Such is the elastic and accumulating nature of our public resources, from the silent augmentation of our population, that, if in any given state of the public revenue, we throw ourselves upon a couch and go to sleep, we may, after a short time, awake with ability abundantly increased to redeem any reasonable amount of public debt with which we may happen to be burdened. The public debt of the United States, though nominally larger now than it was in the year 1791, bears really no sort of discouraging comparison to its amount at that time, whatever standard we choose to adopt to institute the comparison. It was in 1791, about seventy-five millions of dollars. It is now about ninety. Then we had a population of about four millions. Now we have upwards of ten millions. Then we had a revenue short of five millions of dollars. Now our revenue exceeds twenty. If we select population as the standard, our present population is one hundred and fifty per cent. greater than it was in 1791; if revenue, that is four times more now than at the former period; whilst the public debt has increased only in ratio of twenty per cent. A public debt of three hundred millions of dollars, considering our actual ability, compounded both of the increase of population and of revenue, would not be more onerous at present than the debt of seventy-five millions of dollars was at the epoch of 1791, in reference to the same circumstances.

If I am right in supposing, that, under the operation of the proposed measure, there will not be any diminution, but a probable increase of the public revenue, there will be no difficulty in defraying the current expenses of government, and paying the principal, as well as the interest, of the public debt, as it becomes due. Let us for a moment, however, *indulge the improbable supposition of the opponents of the tariff, that there will be a reduction of the revenue to the extent of the most extravagant calculation which has been made, that is to say, to the extent of five millions!* That sum deducted, we shall still have remaining a revenue of about fifteen millions. The treasury estimates of the current service of the years 1822, 1823, and 1824, exceeds, each year, nine millions. The lapse of revolutionary pensions, and judicious retrenchments which might be made, without detriment to any of the essential establishments of the country, would probably reduce them below nine millions. Let us assume that sum, to which add about five millions and a half for the interest of the public debt, and the wants of government will require a revenue of fourteen and a half millions, leaving a surplus of revenue of half a million beyond the public expenditure. Thus, by a postponement of the payment of the prin

cipal of the public debt, in which the public creditors would gladly acquiesce, and confiding for the means of redeeming it in the necessary increase of our revenue from the natural augmentation of our population and consumption, we may safely adopt the proposed measure, even if it should be attended, (which is confidently denied,) with the supposed diminution of revenue. We shall not then have occasion to vary the existing system of taxation; we shall be under no necessity to resort either to direct taxes or to an excise. But, suppose the alternative were really forced upon us of continuing the foreign system, with its inevitable impoverishment of the country, but with the advantage of the present mode of collecting the taxes, or of adopting the American system, with its increase of the national wealth, but with the disadvantage of an excise, could any one hesitate between them? Customs and an excise agree in the essential particulars, that they are both taxes upon consumption, and both are voluntary. They differ only in the mode of collection. The office for the collection of one is located on the frontier, and that for the other within the interior. I believe it was Mr. Jefferson, who, in reply to the boast of a citizen of New York of the amount of the public revenue paid by that city, asked who would pay it if the collector's office were removed to Paulus Hook, on the New Jersey shore? National wealth is the source of all taxation. And, my word for it, the people are too intelligent to be deceived by mere names, and not to give *a decided preference to that system which is based upon their wealth and prosperity, rather than to that which is founded upon their impoverishment and ruin.*

6. But, according to the opponents of the domestic policy, the proposed system will force capital and labor into new and reluctant employments; we are not prepared, in consequence of the high price of wages, for the successful establishment of manufactures, and we must fail in the experiment. We have seen, that the existing occupations of our society, those of agriculture, commerce, navigation, and the learned professions, are overflowing with competitors, and that the want of employment is severely felt. Now what does this bill propose? *To open a new and extensive field of business in which all that choose may enter.* There is no compulsion upon any one to engage in it. An option only is given to industry, to continue in the present unprofitable pursuits, or to embark in new and promising ones. The effect will be to lessen the competition in the old branches of business, and to multiply the resources for increasing our comforts, and augmenting the national wealth.

The alleged fact of the high price of wages, is not admitted. The truth is, that no class of society suffers more, in the present stagnation of business, than the laboring class. That is a necessary effect of the depression of agriculture, the principal business of the community. The wages of able-bodied men vary from five to eight dollars per month; and such has been the want of employment, in some parts of the Union, that *instances have not been unfrequent, of men working merely for the means of present subsistence!*

If the wages for labor here and in England are compared, they will be found not to be essentially different. I agree with the honorable gentleman from Virginia, that high wages are a proof of national prosperity; we differ only in the means by which that desirable end shall be attained. But, if the fact were true, that the wages of labor are high, I deny the correctness of the argument founded upon it. The argument assumes that natural labor is the principal element in the business of manufacture. That was the ancient theory. But the valuable inventions and vast improvements in machinery, which have been made within a few past years, have produced a new era in the arts. The effect of this change, in the powers of production, may be estimated from what I have already stated,

in relation to England, and to the triumphs of European artificial labor over the natural labor of Asia.

In considering the fitness of a nation for the establishment of manufactures, we must no longer limit our views to the state of its population, and the price of wages. All circumstances must be regarded, of which those are, perhaps, the least important. Capital, ingenuity in the construction, and adroitness in the use of machinery, and the possession of the raw materials, are those which deserve the greatest consideration. All these circumstances, (except that of capital, of which there is no deficiency,) exist in our country in an eminent degree, and more than counterbalance the disadvantage, if it really existed, of the lower wages of labor in Great Britain. The dependence upon foreign nations for the raw material of any great manufacture, has been ever considered as a discouraging fact. The state of our population is peculiarly favorable to the most extensive introduction of machinery. We have no prejudices to combat, no persons to drive out of employment. The pamphlet, to which we have had occasion so often to refer, in enumerating the causes which have brought in England their manufactures to such a state of perfection, and which now enable them, in the opinion of the writer, to defy all competition, does not specify as one of them, low wages. It assigns three—1st, capital; 2dly, extent and costliness of machinery; and, 3dly, steady and persevering industry.

Notwithstanding the concurrence of so many favorable causes, in our country, for the introduction of the arts, we are earnestly dissuaded from making the experiment, and our ultimate failure is confidently predicted. Why should we fail? Nations, like men, fail in nothing which they boldly attempt, when sustained by virtuous purpose, and firm resolution. I am not willing to admit this depreciation of American skill and enterprise. I am not willing to strike before an effort is made. All our past history exhorts us to proceed, and inspires us with animating hopes of success.

Past predictions of our incapacity have failed, and present predictions will not be realized. At the commencement of this government, we were told that the attempt would be idle to construct a marine adequate to the commerce of the country, or even to the business of its coasting trade. The founders of our government did not listen to these discouraging counsels; and, behold, the fruits of their just comprehension of our resources! Our restrictive policy was denounced, and it was foretold that it would utterly disappoint all our expectations. But our restrictive policy has been eminently successful; and the share which our navigation now enjoys in the trade with France, and with the British West India islands, attests its victory.

What were not the disheartening predictions of the opponents of the late war? Defeat, discomfiture, and disgrace, were to be the certain, but not the worst, effect of it. Here, again, did prophecy prove false; and the energies of our country, and the valor and the patriotism of our people, carried us gloriously through the war. We are now, and ever will be, essentially, an agricultural people. Without a material change in the fixed habits of the country, the friends of this measure desire to draw to it, as a powerful auxiliary to its industry, the manufacturing arts. The difference between a nation with, and without the arts, may be conceived, by the difference between a keel-boat and a steam-boat, combating the rapid torrent of the Mississippi. How slow does the former ascend, hugging the sinuosities of the shore, pushed on by her hardy and exposed crew, now throwing themselves in vigorous concert on their oars, and then seizing the pendent boughs of overhanging trees: she seems hardly to move; and her scanty cargo is scarcely worth the transportation! With what ease is she not passed by the steam-boat, laden with the riches of all quarters of the

world, with a crowd of gay, cheerful, and protected passengers, now dashing into the midst of the current, or gliding through the eddies near the shore! Nature herself seems to survey, with astonishment, the passing wonder, and, in silent submission, reluctantly to own the magnificent triumphs, in her own vast dominion, of Fulton's immortal genius!

7. But it is said, that wherever there is a concurrence of favorable circumstances, manufactures will arise of themselves, without protection; and that we should not disturb the natural progress of industry, but leave things to themselves. If all nations would modify their policy on this axiom, perhaps it would be better for the common good of the whole. Even then, in consequence of natural advantages and a greater advance in civilization and in the arts, some nations would enjoy a state of much higher prosperity than others. But there is no universal legislation. The globe is divided into different communities, each seeking to appropriate to itself all the advantages it can, without reference to the prosperity of others. Whether this be right or not, it has always been, and ever will be the case. Perhaps the care of the interests of one people, is sufficient for all the wisdom of one legislature; perhaps it is among nations, as among individuals, that the happiness of the whole is best secured by each attending to its own peculiar interests.

The proposition to be maintained by our adversaries, is, that manufactures, without protection, will in due time spring up in our country, and sustain themselves, in a competition with foreign fabrics, however advanced the arts, and whatever the degree of protection may be in foreign countries. Now I contend that this proposition is refuted by all experience, ancient and modern, and in every country. If I am asked, why unprotected industry should not succeed in a struggle with protected industry, I answer, the FACT has ever been so, and that is sufficient; I reply, that UNIFORM EXPERIENCE evinces that it cannot succeed in such an unequal contest, and that is sufficient. If we speculate on the causes of this universal truth, we may differ about them. Still the indisputable fact remains. And we should be as unwise in not availing ourselves of the guide which it furnishes, as a man would be who should refuse to bask in the rays of the sun, because he could not agree with Judge Woodward as to the nature of the substance of that planet, to which we are indebted for heat and light. If I were to attempt to particularize the causes which prevent the success of the manufacturing arts, without protection, I should say, that they are, 1st, the obduracy of fixed habits. No nation, no individual, will easily change an established course of business, even if it be unprofitable; and least of all is an agricultural people prone to innovation. With what reluctance do they not adopt improvements in the instruments of husbandry, or in modes of cultivation! If the farmer makes a good crop and sells it badly; or makes a short crop; buoyed up by hope he perseveres, and trusts that a favorable change of the market, or of the seasons, will enable him, in the succeeding year, to repair the misfortunes of the past. 2ndly, *The uncertainty, fluctuation, and unsteadiness of the home market, when liable to an unrestricted influx of fabrics from all foreign nations;* and 3dly, *The superior advance of skill, and amount of capital, which foreign nations have obtained by the protection of their own industry.* From the latter, or from other causes, the unprotected manufactures of a country are exposed to the danger of being crushed in their infancy, either by the design or from the necessities of foreign manufacturers.

Gentlemen are incredulous as to the attempts of foreign merchants and manufacturers to accomplish the destruction of ours. Why should they not make such attempts? If the Scottish manufacturer, by surcharging our market, in one year, with the article of cotton bagging, for example,

should so reduce the price as to discourage and put down the home manufacture, he would secure to himself the monopoly of the supply. And now having the exclusive possession of the market, perhaps for a long term of years, he might be more than indemnified for his first loss, in the subsequent rise in the price of the article. What have we not seen under our own eyes! The competition for the transportation of the mail, between this place and Baltimore, so excited, that to obtain it, an individual offered, at a great loss, to carry it a whole year for one dollar! His calculation, no doubt, was, that by driving his competitor off the road, and securing to himself the carriage of the mail, he would be afterwards able to repair his original loss by new contracts with the department.

But the necessities of foreign manufacturers, without imputing to them any sinister design, may oblige them to throw into our markets the fabrics which have accumulated on their hands, in consequence of obstruction in the ordinary vents, or from over-calculation; and the forced sales, at losing prices, may prostrate our establishments. From this view of the subject, it follows, that, if we would place the industry of our country upon a solid and unshakeable foundation, we must adopt the protecting policy, which has every where succeeded, and reject that which would abandon it, which has every where failed.

8. But if the policy of protection be wise, the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Barbour,) has made some ingenious calculations to prove that the measure of protection, already extended, has been sufficiently great. With some few exceptions, the existing duties, of which he has made an estimate, were laid with the object of revenue, and without reference to that of encouragement to our domestic industry; and, although it is admitted that the incidental effect of duties so laid is to promote our manufactures, yet, *if it falls short of competent protection, the duties might as well not have been imposed with reference to that purpose.* A moderate addition may accomplish this desirable end; and the proposed tariff is believed to have this character.

9. The prohibitory policy, it is confidently asserted, is condemned by the wisdom of Europe, and by her most enlightened statesmen. Is this the fact? We call upon gentlemen to show in what instance a nation that has enjoyed its benefits has surrendered it. [Here Mr. Barbour rose, (Mr. Clay giving way,) and said that England had departed from it in the China trade, in allowing us to trade with her East India possessions, and in tolerating our navigation to her West India colonies.] With respect to the trade to China, the whole amount of what England has done is to modify the monopoly of the East India Company, in behalf of one and a small part of her subjects, to increase the commerce of another and the greater portion of them. The abolition of the restriction, therefore, operates altogether among the subjects of England; and does not touch at all the interests of foreign powers. The toleration of our commerce to British India, is for the sake of the specie, with which we mainly carry on that commerce, and which, having performed its circuit, returns to Great Britain in exchange for British manufactures.

The relaxation from the colonial policy, in the instance of our trade and navigation with the West Indies, is a most unfortunate example for the honourable gentleman; for it is an illustrious proof of the success of our restrictive policy, when resolutely adhered to. Great Britain had prescribed the terms on which we were to be graciously allowed to carry on that trade. The effect of her regulations was to exclude our navigation altogether, and a complete monopoly, on the part of the British navigation, was secured. We forbade it, unless our vessels should be allowed a perfect reciprocity. Great Britain stood out a long time; but finally yielded, and our navigation now fairly shares with hers in the trade.

Have gentlemen no other to exhibit than these trivial relaxations from prohibitory policy—which do not amount to a drop in the bucket—to prove its abandonment by Great Britain? Let them show us that her laws are repealed which prohibit the introduction of our flour and provisions; of French silks, laces, porcelain, manufactures of bronze, mirrors, woollens; and of the manufactures of all other nations; and then we may be ready to allow that Great Britain has really abolished her prohibitory policy. We find there, on the contrary, that system of policy in full and rigorous operation, and a most curiously interwoven system it is, as she enforces it. She begins by protecting all parts of her immense dominions against foreign nations. She then protects the parent country against the colonies; and finally, one part of the parent country against another. The sagacity of Scotch industry has carried the process of distillation to a perfection, which would place the art in England on a footing of disadvantageous competition, and English distillation has been protected accordingly.

But suppose it were even true that Great Britain had abolished all restrictions upon trade, and allowed the freest introduction of the produce of foreign labour, would that prove it unwise for us to adopt the protecting system? The object of protection is the establishment and perfection of the arts. In England it has accomplished its purpose, fulfilled its end. If she has not carried every branch of manufacture to the same high state of perfection that any other nation has, she has succeeded in so many, that she may safely challenge the most unshackled competition in exchanges. *It is upon this very ground that many of her writers recommend an abandonment of the prohibitory system.* It is to give greater scope to British industry and enterprise. It is upon the same selfish principle. The object of the most perfect freedom of trade, with such a nation as Britain, and of the most rigorous system of prohibition, with a nation whose arts are in their infancy, may both be precisely the same. In both cases it is to give greater expansion to native industry. They only differ in the theatres of their operation. *The abolition of the restrictive system by Britain, if by it she could prevail upon other nations to imitate her example, would have the effect of extending the consumption of British produce in other countries, where her writers boldly affirm it could maintain a fearless competition with the produce of native labour.* The adoption of the restrictive system on the part of the United States, by excluding the produce of foreign labour, would extend the consumption of American produce, unable in the infancy and unprotected state of the arts, to sustain a competition with foreign fabrics.

Let our arts breathe under the shade of protection; let them be perfected as they are in England; and we shall then be ready, as England now is said to be, to put aside protection, and to enter upon the freest exchanges. To what other cause, than to their whole prohibitory policy, can you ascribe British prosperity? It will not do to assign it to that of her antiquity; for France is no less ancient, though much less rich and powerful in proportion to the population and natural advantages of France. Hallam, a sensible and highly approved writer on the middle ages, assigns the revival of the prosperity of the north of Europe to the success of the woollen manufactories of Flanders, and the commerce of which their fabrics became the subject; and the commencement of that of England to the establishment of similar manufactures there under the Edwards, and to the prohibitions which began about the same time. As to the poor rates, the theme of so much reproach without England, and of so much regret within it, among her speculative writers, the system was a strong proof no less of her unbounded wealth than of her pauperism. What other nation can dispense, in the form of regulated charity, the enormous sum, I believe,

of 10 or 12 millions sterling? [Mr. Barbour stated it was reduced to six; to which Mr. Clay replied, that he entertained no doubt but that the benign operation of British protection of home industry had greatly reduced it, within the last few years, by the full employment of her subjects, of which her flourishing trade bore evidence.] The number of British paupers was the result of pressing the principle of population to its utmost limits, by her protecting policy, in the creation of wealth, and in placing the rest of the world under tribute to her industry. Doubtless the condition of England would be better, without paupers, if in other respects it remained the same. But in her actual circumstances the poor system has the salutary effect of an equalizing corrective of the tendency to the conl centration of riches, produced by the genius of her political institutions and by her prohibitory system.

But, is it true that England is convinced of the impolicy of the prohibitory system, and desirous to abandon it? What proof have we to that effect? We are asked to reject the evidence deducible from the settled and steady practice of England, and to take lessons in a school of philosophical writers, whose visionary theories are no where adopted; or if adopted bring with them inevitable distress, impoverishment, and ruin. Let us hear the testimony of an illustrious personage, entitled to the greatest attention, because he speaks after a full experiment of the unrestrictive system made in his own empire. I hope I shall give no offence in quoting from a publication issued from "the mint of Philadelphia;" from a work of Mr. Carey, of whom I seize, with great pleasure, the occasion to say, that he merits the public gratitude, for the disinterested diligence with which he has collected a large mass of highly useful facts, and for the clear and convincing reasoning with which he generally illustrates them. The Emperor of Russia, in March, 1822, after about two years' trial of the free system, says, through Count Nesselrode:

"To produce happy effects, the principles of commercial freedom must be generally adopted. *The state which adopts, whilst others reject them, must condemn its own industry and commerce, to pay a ruinous tribute to those of other nations.*

"From a circulation exempt from restraint, and the facility afforded by reciprocal exchanges, almost all the governments at first resolved to seek the means of repairing the evil which Europe had been doomed to suffer; but *experience, and more correct calculations, because they were made from certain data, and upon the results already known of the peace that had just taken place, forced them soon to adhere to the prohibitory system.*

"*England preserved hers. Austria remained faithful to the rule she had laid down, to guard herself against the rivalship of foreign industry. France, with the same views, adopted the most rigorous measures of precaution. And Prussia published a new tariff in October last, which proves that she found it impossible not to follow the example of the rest of Europe.*

"In proportion as the prohibitory system is extended and rendered perfect in other countries, *that state which pursues the contrary system, makes, from day to day, sacrifices more extensive and more considerable. * * * * It offers a continual encouragement to the manufactures of other countries—and its own manufactures perish in the struggle which they are, as yet, unable to maintain.*

"It is with the most lively feelings of regret we acknowledge it is our own proper experience which enables us to trace this picture. *The evils which it details have been realized in Russia and Poland, since the conclusion of the act of the 7—19 of December, 1818.* AGRICULTURE WITHOUT A MARKET, INDUSTRY WITHOUT PROTECTION, LANGUISH AND DECLINE. SPECIE IS EXPORTED, AND THE MOST SOLID COMMERCIAL HOUSES ARE SHAKEN. The public

prosperity would soon feel the wound inflicted on private fortunes, if new regulations did not promptly change the actual state of affairs.

"*Events have proved that our* AGRICULTURE *and our* COMMERCE, *as well as our* MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY, *are not only paralized, but* BROUGHT TO THE BRINK OF RUIN."

The example of Spain has been properly referred to, as affording a striking proof of the calamities which attend a state that abandons the care of its own internal industry. Her prosperity was greatest, when the arts, brought there by the Moors, flourished most in that kingdom. Then she received from England her wool, and returned it in the manufactured state; and then England was least prosperous. The two nations have reversed conditions. Spain, after the discovery of America, yielding to an inordinate passion for the gold of the Indies, sought in their mines that wealth which might have been better created at home. Can the remarkable difference in the state of the prosperity of the two countries, be otherwise explained, than by the opposite systems which they pursued? England, by a sedulous attention to her home industry, supplied the means of an advantageous commerce with her colonies. Spain, by an utter neglect of her domestic resources, confided altogether inthose which she derived from her colonies, and presents an instance of the greatest adversity. Her colonies were infinitely more valuable than those of England; and if she had adopted a similar policy, is it unreasonable to suppose that, in wealth and power, she would have surpassed England? I think the honourable gentleman from Virginia does great injustice to the Catholic religion, in specifying that as one of the leading causes of the decline of Spain. It is a religion entitled to great respect; and there is nothing in its character incompatible with the highest degree of national prosperity. Is not France, the most polished, in many other respects the most distinguished state of Christendom, Catholic? Is not Flanders, the most populous part of Europe, also Catholic? Are the Catholic parts of Switzerland and of Germany less prosperous than those which are Protestant?

10. The next objection of the honourable gentleman fromVirginia,which I shall briefly notice, is, that the manufacturing system is adverse to the genius of our gevernment, in its tendency to the accumulation of large capitals in a few hands; in the corruption of the public morals, which is alleged to be incident to it; and in the consequent danger to the public liberty. The first part of the objection would apply to every lucrative business, to commerce, to planting, and to the learned professions. Would the gentleman introduce the system of Lycurgus? If his principle be correct, it should be extended to any and every vocation which had a similar tendency. The enormous fortunes in our country—the nabobs of the land—have been chiefly made by the profitable pursuit of that foreign commerce in more propitious times, which the honourable gentleman would so carefully cherish. Immense estates have also been made in the South. The dependents are, perhaps, not more numerous upon that wealth which is accumulated in manufactures, than they are upon that which is acquired by commerce and by agriculture. We may safely confide in the laws of distributions, and in the absence of the rule of primogeniture, for the dissipation, perhaps too rapid, of large fortunes. What has become of those which were held two or three generations back in Virginia? Many of the descendants of the ancient aristocracy, as it was called, of that state, are now in the most indigent condition. *The best security against the demoralization of society, is the constant and profitable employment of its members. The greatest danger to the public liberty is from idleness and vice. If manufactures form cities, so does commerce.* And the disorders and violence which proceed from the contagion of the passions, are as frequent in one description of those communities as in the other. There is no doubt but

that the yeomanry of a country is the safest depository of public liberty. In all time to come, and under any probable direction of the labour of our population, the agricultural class must be much the most numerous and powerful, and will ever retain, as it ought to retain, a preponderating influence in our councils. The extent and fertility of our lands constitute an adequate security against an excess in manufactures, and also against oppression on the part of capitalists towards the labouring portions of the community.

11. The last objection, with a notice of which I shall trouble the Committee, is, that the Constitution does not authorize the passage of the bill. The gentleman from Virginia does not assert, indeed, that it is inconsistent with the express provisions of that instrument; but he thinks it incompatible with the spirit of the Constitution. If we attempt to provide for the internal improvement of the country, the Constitution, according to some gentlemen, stands in our way. If we attempt to protect American industry against foreign policy and the rivalry of foreign industry, the Constitution presents an insuperable obstacle. This Constitution must be a most singular instrument! It seems to be made for any other people than our own. Its action is altogether foreign. Congress has power to lay duties and imposts, under no other limitation whatever than that of being uniform throughout the United States. But they can only be imposed, according to the honorable gentleman, for the sole purpose of revenue. This is a restriction which we do not find in the Constitution. No doubt revenue was a principal object with the framers of the Constitution in investing Congress with the power. But, in executing it, may not the duties and imposts be so laid as to secure domestic interests? Or is Congress denied all discretion as to the amount or the distribution of the duties and imposts?

The gentleman from Virginia has, however, entirely mistaken the clause of the Constitution on which we rely. It is that which gives to congress the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations. The grant is plenary, without any limitation whatever, and includes the whole power of regulation, of which the subject to be regulated is susceptible. It is as full and complete a grant of the power, as the grant to declare war. What is a regulation of commerce? It implies the admission or exclusion of the objects of it and the terms. Under this power some articles, by the existing laws, are admitted freely, others are subjected to duties so high as to amount to their prohibition, and various rates of duties are applied to others. Under this power, laws of total non-intercourse with some nations, and embargoes, producing an entire cessation of commerce with all foreign countries, have been, from time to time, passed. These laws I have no doubt, met with the entire approbation of the gentleman from Virginia. [Mr. Barbour said that he was not in congress.] Wherever the gentleman was, whether on his farm or in the pursuit of that profession of which he is an ornament, I have no doubt that he gave his zealous support to the laws referred to.

The principle of the system under consideration, has the sanction of some of the best and wisest men, in all ages, in foreign countries as well as in our own—of the Edwards, of Henry the Great, of Elizabeth, of the Colberts, abroad; of our Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton, at home. But it comes recommended to us by a higher authority than any of these, illustrious as they unquestionably are—by the master spirit of the age—that extraordinary man, who has thrown the Alexanders and the Cæsars infinitely further behind him than they stood in advance of the most eminent of their predecessors—that singular man, who, whether he was seated on his imperial throne, deciding the fate of nations and allotting kingdoms to the members of his family, with the same composure, if not with the same affection, as that with which a Virginia father divides his plantations among his children, or on the miserable rock of St. Helena, to which he was condemned by the cruelty and the injustice of his unworthy

victors, is equally an object of the most intense admiration. He appears to have comprehended, with the rapidity of intuition, the true interests of a state, and to have been able, by the turn of a single expression, to develope the secret springs of the policy of cabinets. We find that Las Cases reports him to have said:

"He opposed the principles of the economists, which," he said, "were correct in theory, though erroneous in their application. The political constitution of different states, continued he, must render these principles defective; local circumstances continually call for deviations from their uniformity. Duties, he said, which were so severely condemned by political economists, should not, it is true, be an object to the treasury: *they should be the guarantee and protection of a nation, and should correspond with the nature and the objects of its trade.* Holland, which is destitute of productions and manufactures, and which has a trade only of transit and commission, should be free of all fetters and barriers. France, on the contrary, which is rich in every sort of production and manufactures, should incessantly guard against the importations of a rival, who might still continue superior to her, and also against the cupidity, egotism, and indifference of mere brokers.

"I have not fallen into the error of modern systematizers," said the Emperor, "who imagine that all the wisdom of nations is centred in themselves. *Experience is the true wisdom of nations.* And what does all the reasoning of the economists amount to? They incessantly extol the prosperity of England, and hold her up as our model; but the custom house system is more burdensome and arbitrary in England than in any other country. They also condemn prohibitions, yet it was England set the example of prohibitions; and they are in fact necessary with regard to certain objects. *Duties cannot adequately supply the place of prohibitions;* there will always be found means to defeat the object of the legislator. In France we are still very far behind on these delicate points, which are still unperceived or ill-understood by the mass of society. Yet, what advancement have we not made,—what correctness of ideas has been introduced by my gradual classification of agriculture, industry, and trade; objects so distinct in themselves, and which present so great and positive a graduation!

"1st.—*Agriculture;* the soul, the first basis of the empire.

"2d.—*Industry;* the comfort and happiness of the population.

"3d.—*Foreign trade;* the superabundance, the proper application of the surplus of agriculture and industry.

"Agriculture was continually improving during the whole course of the revolution. Foreigners thought it ruined in France. In 1814, however, the English were compelled to admit that we had little or nothing to learn from them.

"Industry, or manufactures, and internal trade, made immense progress during my reign. The application of chemistry to manufactures caused them to advance with giant strides. I gave an impulse, the effects of which extended throughout Europe.

"*Foreign trade, which in its results is infinitely inferior to agriculture, was an object of subordinate importance in my mind. Foreign trade is made for agriculture and home industry, and not the two latter for the former.* The interests of these three fundamental cases are diverging and frequently conflicting. I always promoted them in their natural gradation; but I could not and ought not to have ranked them all on an equality. Time will unfold what I have done, the national resources which I created, and the emancipation from the English which I brought about. We have now the secret of the commercial treaty of 1786. France still exclaims against its author; but the English demanded it on pain of resuming the war. They wished to do the same after the treaty of Amiens; but I was then all-powerful; I was a hundred cubits high. I replied that it

they were in possession of the heights of Montmartre, I would still refuse to sign the treaty. These words were echoed through Europe.

"The English will now impose some such treaty on France, at least if popular clamor, and the opposition of the mass of the nation, do not force them to draw back. This thraldom would be an additional disgrace in the eyes of that nation, which is now beginning to acquire a just perception of her own interests.

"When I came to the head of the government, the American ships, which were permitted to enter our ports on the score of their neutrality, brought us raw materials, and had the impudence to sail from France without freight, for the purpose of taking in cargoes of English goods in London. They moreover had the insolence to make their payments, when they had any to make, by giving bills on persons in London. Hence the vast profits reaped by the English manufacturers and brokers, entirely to our prejudice. I made a law that no American should import goods to any amount, without immediately exporting their exact equivalent. A loud outcry was raised against this: it was said that I had ruined trade. But what was the consequence? Notwithstanding the closing of my ports, and in spite of the English who ruled the seas, the Americans returned and submitted to my regulations. What might I not have done under more favourable circumstances?

"Thus I naturalized in France the manufacture of cotton, which includes:—

"1st. *Spun-cotton.*—We did not previously spin it ourselves; the English supplied us with it as a sort of favour.

"2d. *The web.*—We did not yet make it; it came to us from abroad.

"3d. *The printing.*—This was the only part of the manufacture that we performed ourselves. I wished to naturalize the two first branches; and I proposed to the Council of State, that their importation should be prohibited. This excited great alarm. I sent for Oberkamp, and I conversed with him a long time. I learned from him, that this prohibition would doubtless produce a shock, but that after a year or two of perseverance, it would prove a triumph, whence we should derive immense advantages. Then I issued my decree in spite of all; this was a true piece of statesmanship.

"I at first confined myself merely to prohibiting the web; then I extended the prohibition to spun cotton; and we now possess within ourselves the three branches of the cotton manufacture, to the great benefit of our population, and the injury and regret of the English:—which proves that in civil government, as well as in war, decision of character is often indispensable to success."

I will trouble the committee with only one other quotation, which I shall make from Lowe, and from hearing which, the committee must share with me in the mortification which I felt on perusing it. That author says: "It is now above forty years since the United States of America were definitely separated from us, and since their situation has afforded a proof that *the benefit of mercantile intercourse may be retained, in all its extent, without the care of governing, or the expense of defending these once regretted provinces.*" Is there not too much truth in this observation? By adhering to the foreign policy, which I have been discussing, *do we not remain essentially British, in every thing but the form of our government? Are not our interests, our industry, our commerce, so modified as to swell British pride, and to increase British power?*

Mr. Chairman, our confederacy comprehends, within its vast limits, great diversity of interests—agricultural—planting—farming—commercial—navigating—fishing—manufacturing. No one of these interests is felt in the same degree, and cherished with the same solicitude, throughout all parts of the Union. Some of them are peculiar to particular sections of our common

country. But all these great interests are confided to the protection of one government—to the fate of one ship; and a most gallant ship it is, with a noble crew. *If we prosper, and are happy, protection must be extended to all; it is due to all. It is the great principle on which obedience is demanded from all. If our essential interests cannot find protection from our own government against the policy of foreign powers, where are they to get it?* We did not unite for sacrifice, but for preservation. The inquiry should be, in reference to the great interests of every section of the Union, (I speak not of minute subdivisions,) what would be done for those interests if that section stood alone and separated from the residue of the Republic? If the promotion of those interests would not injuriously affect any other section, then every thing should be done for them, which would be done if it formed a distinct government. If they come into absolute collision with the interests of another section, a reconciliation, if possible, should be attempted, by mutual concession, so as to avoid a sacrifice of the prosperity of either to that of the other. In such a case all should not be done for one which would be done if it were separated and independent, but something; and, in devising the measure, the good of each part and of the whole should be carefully consulted. This is the only mode by which we can preserve, in full vigour, the harmony of the whole Union. The south entertains one opinion, and imagines that a modification of the existing policy of the country, for the protection of American industry, involves the ruin of the south. The north, the east, the west, hold the opposite opinion, and feel and contemplate, in a long adherence to the foreign policy, as it now exists, their utter destruction. Is it true that the interests of these great sections of our country are irreconcilable with each other? *Are we reduced to the sad and afflicting dilemma of determining which shall fall a victim to the prosperity of the other?* Happily, I think, there is no such distressing alternative. If the north, the west, and the east, formed an independent state, unassociated with the south, can there be a doubt that the restrictive system would be carried to the point of prohibition of every foreign fabric of which they produce the raw material, and which they could manufacture? Such would be their policy, if they stood alone; but they are fortunately connected with the south, which believes its interest to require a free admission of foreign manufactures. Here then is a case for mutual concession, for fair compromise. The bill under consideration presents this compromise. It is a medium between the absolute exclusion and the unrestricted admission of the produce of foreign industry. It sacrifices the interest of neither section to that of the other; neither, it is true, gets all that it wants, nor is subject to all that it fears.

But it has been said that the south obtains nothing in this compromise. Does it lose any thing? is the first question. I have endeavoured to prove that it does not, by showing that a mere transfer is effected in the source of the supply of its consumption from Europe to America; and that the loss, whatever it may be, of the sale of its great staple in Europe, is compensated by the new market created in America. But does the south really gain nothing in this compromise? The consumption of the other sections, though somewhat restricted, is still left open by this bill, to foreign fabrics, purchased by southern staples. So far its operation is beneficial to the south, and prejudicial to the industry of the other sections, and that is the point of mutual concession. The south will also gain by the extended consumption of its great staple, produced by an increased capacity to consume it in consequence of the establishment of the home market. But the south cannot exert its industry and enterprise in the business of manufactures! Why not? The difficulties, if not exaggerated, are artificial, and may therefore be surmounted. But can the other sections embark in the planting occupations of the south? The obstructions which forbid them are natural, created by the immutable laws of God, and therefore unconquerable.

Other and animating considerations invite us to adopt the policy of this system. Its importance, in connexion with general defence in time of war, cannot fail to be duly estimated. *Need I recall to our painful recollection the sufferings, for the want of an adequate supply of absolute necessaries, to which the defenders of their country's rights and our entire population were subjected during the late war?* Or remind the committee of the great advantage of a steady and unfailing source of supply, unaffected alike in war and in peace? Its importance, in reference to the stability of our Union, that paramount and greatest of all our interests, cannot fail warmly to recommend it, or at least to conciliate the forbearance of every patriot bosom. Now our people present the spectacle of a vast assemblage of jealous rivals, all eagerly rushing to the sea-board, jostling each other in their way, to hurry off to glutted foreign markets the perishable produce of their labour. The tendency of that policy, in conformity to which this bill is prepared, is to transform these competitors into friends and mutual customers; and, by the reciprocal exchanges of their respective productions, to place the confederacy upon the most solid of all foundations, the basis of common interest. And is not government called upon, by every stimulating motive, to adapt its policy to the actual condition and extended growth of our great republic? At the commencement of our Constitution, almost the whole population of the United States was confined between the Alleghany mountains and the Atlantic ocean. Since that epoch, the western part of New-York, of Pennsylvania, of Virginia, all the western states and territories, have been principally peopled. Prior to that period, we had scarcely any interior. An interior has sprung up as it were by enchantment, and along with it new interests and new relations, requiring the parental protection of government. Our policy should be modified accordingly, so as to comprehend all, and sacrifice none. And are we not encouraged by the success of past experience, in respect to the only article which has been adequately protected? Already have the predictions of the friends of the American system, in even a shorter time than their most sanguine hopes could have anticipated, been completely realized in regard to that article; and consumption is now better and cheaper supplied with coarse cottons, than it was under the prevalence of the foreign system.

Even if the benefits of the policy were limited to certain sections of our country, *would it not be satisfactory to behold American industry, wherever situated, active, animated, and thrifty, rather then persevere in a course which renders us subservient to foreign industry?* But these benefits are twofold, direct and collateral, and in the one shape or the other they will diffuse themselves throughout the Union. All parts of the Union will participate, more or less, in both. As to the direct benefit, it is probable that the North and the East will enjoy the largest share. But the West and the South will also participate in them. Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Richmond, will divide with the Nothern capitals the business of manufacturing. The latter city unites more advantages for its successful prosecution than any other place I know; Zanesville, in Ohio, only excepted. And where the direct benefit does not accrue, that will be enjoyed of supplying the raw material and provisions for the consumption of artisans. Is it not most desirable to put at rest and prevent the annual recurrence of this unpleasant subject so well fitted by the various interests to which it appeals, to excite irritation and to produce discontent? Can that be effected by its rejection? Behold the mass of petitions which lie on our table, earnestly and anxiously entreating the protecting interposition of Congress against the ruinous policy which we are pursuing. Will these petitioners, comprehending all orders of society, entire states and communities, public companies and private individuals, spontaneously assembling, cease in their humble prayers by your leading a deaf ear? Can you expect that these petitioners, and others in countless numbers, that will, if you delay the

passage of this bill, *supplicate your mercy, should contemplate their substance gradually withdrawn to foreign countries, their ruin slow, but certain and as inevitable as death itself, without one expiring effort?* You think the measure injurious to you; we believe our preservation depends upon its adoption. Our convictions, mutually honest, are equally strong. What is to be done? *I invoke that saving spirit of mutual concession under which our blessed Constitution was formed, and under which alone it can be happily administered. I appeal to the South—to the high-minded, generous, and patriotic South—with which I have so often co-operated, in attempting to sustain the honour and to vindicate the rights of our country. Should it not offer upon the altar of the public good, some sacrifice of its peculiar opinions? Of what does it complain? A possible temporary enhancement in the objects of consumption. Of what do we complain? A total incapacity, produced by the foreign policy, to purchase at any price, necessary foreign objects of consumption. In such an alternative, inconvenient only to the south; ruinous to us, can we expect too much from Southern magnanimity?* The just and confident expectation of the passage of this bill has flooded the country with recent importations of foreign fabrics. If it should not pass, they will complete the work of destruction of our domestic industry. If it should pass, they will prevent any considerable rise in the price of foreign commodities, until our own industry shall be able to supply competent substitutes.

To the friends of the tariff, I would also anxiously appeal. Every arrangement of its provisions does not suit each of you; you desire some further alterations; you would make it perfect. You want what you will never get. Nothing human is perfect. And I have seen with great surprise, a piece signed by a member of Congress, published in the National Intelligencer, stating that this bill must be rejected, and a judicious tariff brought in as its substitute. A *judicious* tariff! No member of Congress could have signed that piece; or, if he did, the public ought not to be deceived. If this bill do not pass, unquestionably no other can pass at this session, or probably during this Congress. And who will go home and say that he rejected all the benefits of this bill, because molasses has been subjected to the enormous additional duty of five cents per gallon? I call, therefore, upon the friends of the American policy, to yield somewhat of their own peculiar wishes, and not to reject the practicable in the idle pursuit after the unattainable. Let us imitate the illustrious example of the framers of the Constitution, and always remembering that whatever springs from man partakes of his imperfections, depend upon experience to suggest, in future, the necessary amendments.

We have had great difficulties to encounter. 1. The splendid talents which are arrayed in this house against us. 2. We are opposed by the rich and powerful in the land. 3. The Executive government, if any affords us but a cold and equivocal support. 4. The importing and navigating interest, I verily believe from misconception, are adverse to us. 5. The British factors and the British influence are inimical to our success. 6. Long established habits and prejudices oppose us. 7. The reviewers and literary speculators, foreign and domestic. And, lastly, the leading presses of the country, including the influence of that which is established in this city, and sustained by the public purse.

From some of these, or other causes, the bill may be postponed, thwarted, defeated. But *the cause is the cause of the country, and it must and will prevail. It is founded in the interest and affections of the people. It is as native as the granite deeply embosomed in our mountains. And, in conclusion, I would pray* GOD, *in his infinite mercy, to avert from our country the evils which are impending over it, and by enlightening our councils, to conduct us into that path which leads to riches, to greatness, to glory.*

(THE END.)